IRON LORD

Taken from Amiga-Manuals-Website

UBI SOFT

Entertainment Software

IRON LORD

The sun had long since disappeared beyond the horizon. A constant glacial wind blew about the layers of fog gathered around the castle. Behind the lowered portcullis, a guard wrapped up in a cape warmed himself in front of a brazier, fighting off cold and his fatigue. Since nightfall he had stood there, chilled to the bone..., peering vainly into the gloom, aided from time to time by a dim moonbeam. His night-watch was almost at an end and he was comforted by the thought of his warm room awaiting him.

Suddenly, the night seemed to grow even darker, as if an immense shadow had just masked the moon, emphasizing the menacing aspect of the fog. The guard shivered in spite of himself. He told himself that it was due to the cold, and gripped his lance more tightly... At that very moment he noticed a figure standing immobile on the other side of the portcullis. The guard started, suppressing a cry of surprise. In fact, although the fog usually muffled any sound, it was impossible for anyone to arrive at the gateway without his footsteps on the pebbly ground betraying his arrival.

"Who goes there" ? asked the sentry in a loud but not very confident voice.

"I am a traveller, and I would like to see your lord..." replied the stranger. The latter spoke with great ease, and a slight note of authority could be heard in his deep voice.

"Who do you think you are, disturbing the lord at this late hour" ? asked the guard, approaching with a lantern in his hand. The stranger, lit up by a misty halo, still hadn't moved. He was dressed very elegantly, in the style popular in faraway lands. His clothes were dark and a large cloak covered his shoulders, in sharp contrast to other foreigners who were usually dressed in bright colours.

"I am Zolphar", he replied coldly, "your master's brother".

The guard didn't let his scepticism and mistrust show, for there was something rather unusual about his nocturnal visitor's determination. He took a horn hanging on the wall and sounded out three short notes. Soon

afterwards, the sound of footsteps on the cobbles could be heard from afar. A heavily built man wearing the insignia of Captain of the Guard appeared. He was no longer a young man, and the many scars on his face hardened by time revealed that he had once been a great warrior. The captain, named Malthom, was indeed one of the oldest warriors in the kingdom. His talent and loyalty had promoted him to the rank of friend and confident of the lord and his family.

"My word" ! he exclaimed before the guard had the chance to say a word, "Lord Zolphar, what brings you here" ?

"I am glad that someone actually recognizes me" replied Zolphar. "I also remember you Malthom, you haven't changed".

"And yet it's been years since we last met", said Malthom with a pensive air ; then addressing the guard, "don't make our guest wait any longer, open the door".

As Malthom and Zolphar walked through a maze of courtyards, corridors and galleries leading to the manorial quarters, Zolphar suddenly recollected the past. He was slightly younger than Tibor, the present Lord. He had always suffered from being the youngest son and kept himself to himself, preferring to be alone, whereas Tibor had been a talkative and gracious boy. Zolphar's behaviour had earned him the nickname "Dark One". One day, Zolphar was involved in a plan to overthrow his brother. The attempt failed and he was forced to leave the kingdom immediately. No one had heard of him since.

After being announced, the two men entered the manorial appartments. Lord Tibor, who had been informed of their arrival by the guard, was waiting impatiently.

"My brother, your visit gladdens my heart. I have not heard from you for so long. Come, make yourself comfortable and tell me everything. I shall send for something to eat".

Tibor had never believed the accusations against his brother, and even if they had been true, he would have forgiven his youthful sins after so many years. He ordered a heavily laden table to be set in honour of his brother.

"At last you've come back home. But where on earth have you been all these years" ? asked Tibor, observing his brother who was calmly tasting the various dishes. Tibor was intrigued by the distant attitude of his brother, who acted as if he was not part of his surroundings, no longer of this world.

"When I first left, I spent a lot of time travelling. I visited lands where no man had ever set foot before. Above all, I met men of infinite learning".

"So some of your friends were scholars".

"My friends ? No, not really. Let's say rather that they were professors, masters. My own knowledge now far surpasses most of theirs. I could also boast about my belonging to the Circle of the Powerful... but let's talk about something else, for you certainly don't understand much of what I've been saying".

Almost immediately, Zolphar's face had darkened, and a cruel light glimmered in his eyes.

"Yes, indeed", replied Tibor, who was troubled by his brother's strange attitude.

"And you" added Zolphar, in a lighter tone, "what has become of you" ?

"As you can see, I am still ruling my kingdom. And for the past three years, I have had the pleasure of watching my son, who will naturally succeed me, become a man. His mother passed away while giving birth. You will meet him later".

"Yes, I think that perhaps I should retire, the voyage has completely exhausted me".

"Of course, I'll show you to your room. We'll continue this conversation tomorrow".

"Nothing is ever certain about tomorrow", replied Zolphar with a strange smile... Tibor had just arisen from his bed, and began pacing up and down his room nervously. Ever since his brother's arrival, a strange atmosphere seemed to prevail in the kingdom. It made him feel quite uncomfortable. Tibor went out, resolved to let the night air calm him down. He took the path to the battlements. He hardly recognized his brother now. Even if Zolphar still looked the same, something inside had obviously changed. An

aura of contained power now seemed to emanate from Zolphar. It was all so odd.

As he walked along the ramparts, his face whipped by the wind and the cold night air, he suddenly made out a figure not far away. Zolphar stood a few paces away from him, leaning against the battlements and staring into the darkness.

"Zolphar ! What are you doing here ?" Zolphar barely turned his head, giving his brother an oblique look.

"I knew you would come Tibor. Nightfall is not a time of rest, but of action". Zolphar now turned towards his brother, revealing a cruel smile.

"Didn't you ever wonder, my dear brother, why I would come back after all these years ?" He seemed about to burst out laughing. Tibor remained silent, completely overwhelmed by the situation.

"Well, know I shall tell you. I've come to take what should have always been mine... I'm going to put an end to your insignificant little rule".

"What are you talking about ? Have you gone mad ? You could nev..."

Before Tibor could finish what he was saying, Zolphar placed his hand on his brother's chest and uttered an incantation. Tibor immediately turned crimson, the veins in his neck swelled up, he started bleeding and soon died from suffocation. Zolphar couldn't help crying with joy at the sight of his brother's purplish bloody face, and he burst out laughing in a sinister manner. He turned towards the horizon which he contemplated for a long time. He then started muttering a new incantation. The sky grew even darker and a mass of black clouds appeared above the castle. Zolphar's cape blew in the wind. A bolt of lightning tore across the sky and a tree crashed to the ground. Suddenly, the beating of wings could be heard in the distance. A group of hideous creatures flew towards Zolphar. Their wings were webbed, like those of bats, joined to their emaciated bodies. Their red eyes, which resembled fiery coals, lit up their monstruous half-animal, half-demonic faces. Their long hairless bodies ended in a sharply-pointed scaly tail. Yet that was nothing compared to the double row of razor-sharp teeth jutting from their drooling, half-open mouths. The creatures perched on the

battlements watching the one who had summoned them. Zolphar addressed them in a hissing voice.

Beyond the ramparts, one could now hear scraping, rattling and moaning sounds, as well as the click-clacking of the claws.

The sentries were becoming suspicious of these curious noises. The moon, now completely hidden by a dark cloud, made it impossible to distinguish anything but a disgusting odour of rot linguering in the air. Suddenly, the clouds disappeared, bathing the castle and the plain in an almost unreal light. It was then that the watchmen were treated to a horrible sight : the plain was filled with an entire army, but not just any army... Under the helmets one could make out bony skulls. The chain-mail of these zombie-like creatures protected their rotting flesh. One could also make out two-headed "Cerberi' with slavering, foaming mouths, as well as ghouls and other nauseating zombies.

Although this nightmarish army stood still, apparently waiting for some kind of order, the horrified guards almost simultaneously sounded the alert with their bugles. Zolphar let out a war cry in a mystical tongue. The winged, screeching creatures flew off, while outside an inhuman clamour rose from the chaotic troop, announcing its attack.The guards inside the castle, who had been roused from their sleep, slowly started to get ready. They wondered what could be happening. Meanwhile, the flying creatures rushed towards the guard-post protecting the portcullis.

The first two creatures were met with a flood of arrows, killing them on the spot, but this did not stop the rest of them, who descended upon the terrified guards. One of them was borne up into the air and dropped 75 feet higher. He was killed on contact with the ground. Another guard had his eyes gouged out by a terrible blow from a creature's pointy tail to the face. Others simply had their throats slit by the monsters' powerful jaws. And even if a few creatures had been killed at the beginning of the attack, every last guard was eventually massacred. The monsters then proceeded immediately to open the gateway with a turn of a wheel.

A few soldiers appeared in the courtyard and let fly a stream of arrows, but

it was too late, for the ghoulish army had already entered the castle. Valiant though they were, the soldiers quickly realized that they were defeated. As arrows were only effective against the "Cerberi", close combat was inevitable. Yet unfortunately the zombies were at their most fearsome in this type of combat. They displayed unimaginable savagery, sacrificing themselves when necessary, to be immediately replaced by a second wave of zombies. The soldiers retreated, but their pursuers had invaded the whole of the castle, chasing the fleeing soldiers into every nook and cranny. There was hardly one barricaded gate or door that resisted more than ten minutes of the devastating attack. The "Cerberi" threw themselves upon their moaning victims' throats. The flying creatures had quickly thrown from the ramparts all those archers covering their colleagues below.

Yet the savage hoard was too busy massacring the wounded survivors to notice a figure stealing towards the stables, hugging a package to his chest. Malthom closed the door of the stable. The sword he was holding dripped with blood and some fragments of rotting flesh still clung to it.

Suddenly, there was a growling sound and a dark mass rushed at him. He was so fast with his sword that you could only glimpse a flash of the blade. The two-headed "Cerberus" was stopped in full stride. Malthom's sword had decapitated him at one fell swoop. Malthom then saddled his horse and looked at his charge. Tibor's son was sleeping peacefully despite the battle. Malthom attached the child to his chest with his cloak and quietly left, holding his horse by the bridle. He knew that nothing could be done here.

Zolphar was on the ramparts savouring his victory and did not notice the shadowy figures moving further and further away from the castle. At sunrise, not a single guard was alive. The ghoulish army had left behind them only death and desolation. Zolphar had sent them back to the world of darkness. All the corpses had been burned, leaving no trace of the terrible event. Zolphar was now the new ruler of the Green Country.

Meanwhile, Malthom rode continuously for most of the night. He wanted to reach the forest as quickly as possible, for he knew that it was relatively safe place ; few people ever went there.

The woods were dark and unwelcoming. Numerous animals fled into the bushes as they approached. Malthom was worried, as he had to find them a shelter for the night, but he was not familiar with the forest. To make matters worse, the boy had woken up and was hungry, yet Malthom had nothing to feed him.

Malthom was soon relieved when he came to a clearing and saw a small hut. He quietly approached, sword in hand, and peered into the window. Inside the hut an old man seemed to be cooking. Malthom went in, pushing the door open, and stood there with his sword ready and the boy clinging fearfully to his ankles. The man appeared to be quite old : his hair was white and his face was covered with wrinkles. His eyes, though, seemed to deny his age.

"Hello strangers, I've been waiting for you... Don't brandish your sword around in that fashion, you have nothing to fear from me".

"How could you have been waiting for us, since I didn't even know myself that I'd be coming ? " asked Malthom incredulously.

"I know many things, noble Malthom. Come in and sit down. I have prepared a meal for you as I imagined that you'd be hungry".

While they ate, the old man explained many things to them. He was a hermit, but also a wizard. He had seen the attack which destroyed the castle in the flames of a divinatory fire. He had also seen Malthom and the boy fleeing, and had therefore guided them to him by magic.

"Zolphar is an extremely powerful evil being", added the old wizard. "You were very lucky to have escaped. You must do all you can to kill him, for I know of his plans to reap havoc once again. Alas, even I, one of the most powerful wizards, can do nothing to fight this demon. However, all is not lost, for there is a prophecy that says that only someone of the same blood can overcome him. That is why he killed his brother. Luckily Tibor's son is still alive, as it will be up to him to triumph over Zolphar. Malthom, you must make of this boy an incomparable warrior capable of raising an army. Only those soldiers who are under his command will be able to overthrow Zolphar. Unfortunately, I cannot be of much help to you, for my days are

coming to an end and I will soon have to choose another life-form for my soul. I would like you to know, in any event, that I wish you the best of luck".

And thus they followed the old wizard's instructions. As the years went by, Malthom taught Tibor's son the art of fighting, in the heart of the forest.

Many years have passed and Malthom is now an old man, but Tibor's son is there to follow after him. He is now a fierce warrior with a burning desire to avenge his father.

At last the day arrived when the pupil had nothing left to learn from his master. The young man was ready to face Zolphar. Before leaving, he promised Malthom that there would be a place waiting for him once he had overthrown Zolphar and won back the castle. And with tears in their eyes they said goodbye, like a father and son would have done.

Upon his arrival at the foot of the castle, the young knight felt a shiver run up his spine. In the place of his proud family's residence nothing remained but an old abandoned castle. He entered it and climbed the steps of the highest tower, watching out for the crumbling stones which frequently disintegrated under his feet.

From the tower he could look out upon the green countryside that was rightfully his. Although there was no real lord, the region seemed to have prospered. However, he knew that the threat from his uncle was very much alive. This time though, it would be different. He now knew a lot about his enemy, which was certainly in his favour.

Zolphar was about to meet an opponent who'd be a match for him. The young man's honour was at stake. He would finally be able to put into practice everything that Malthom had taught him all these years.

"The law of the Iron Lords".

And now, it's your turn to play...

IRON LORD

B - PHASES OF ACTION

1) THE ARCHERY CONTEST

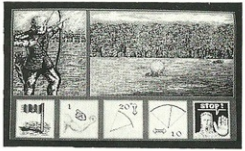
To begin this contest, press the firing button on your joystick.
This is a test of your archery skill. It's divided into three parts : two qualifying rounds followed by the final decisive round.
Each round is composed of seven firing sequences, which in turn comprise four attempts per target.

If you choose to abandon a game in progress, you won't have to start over again from scratch (for example : you don't have to recommence the first round if you have previously passed it).

A round is completed once you have obtained the required number of points. Your success alone will enable you to progress in this contest and maybe win the trophy.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ICONS:

All the commands are made through the icons at the bottom of the screen. The left-hand window depicts your video character. The right-hand window shows your viewpoint of the target.



- The icon carrying a flag informs you about the force and the direction of the wind.

- The second arm-shaped one adjusts your firing power.

- The third icon from the left selects the trajectory height. Place the cursor on either of the arrow's tips and press the firing button to increase or reduce the height of your shot. When you think you've reached the ideal height, release the

button.

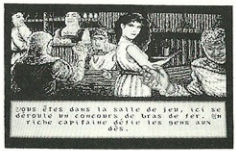
- The fourth icon from the left enables you to choose the angle in relation to the target. Place the cursor on one of the arrow's tips and press the firing button to increase or decrease your shooting angle. When you reckon that you've established the best possible angle, release the joystick button.
- Finally, the "STOP" icon enables you to abandon the contest at any moment in time.

FIRING AN ARROW :

When you've chosen the height, angle and range of your arrow, place the cursor on the window depicting your character and press the joystick button. Your firing power should then increase. But watch out ! You must hold the button pressed down in order to change the level of your firing power. When you judge the power level sufficient, release the joystick button.

The arrow is then propelled towards the target. If you manage to hit the target, a close-up display enables you to evaluate your shot and improve it the next time. Should your arrow miss the target completely, a topside view will show you your mistake so that you can correct it.

2) THE GAMBLING HALL



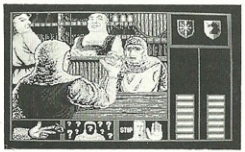
The gambling hall is a favourite haunt of the local people. Some go there to try and get rich by gambling. Others prefer to watch the armwrestling champions in action. And alcohol is readily available here !
To select your choice of game, place the cursor on the display and then press the joystick button to confirm

your choice.

To take part in an armwrestling match, place the cursor on the two characters fighting to the left of the screen. To play dice, choose the dice-thrower to the right of the screen. If you want a drink, select the waitress in the middle of the screen.

If at any time you want to leave the gambling hall, place the cursor on the lower window and press the joystick button.

THE ARM-WRESTLING CONTEST



In order to win this test you must beat nine opponents. This contest is designed to reveal your strength and endurance.
The overall display of the game is divided into several sections :

The main upper left-hand display is a rear-view of you sitting opposite your opponent.

The right-hand columns reveal your power level ; it's crowned with your coat of arms. The left-hand columns are those of your opponent. These come in handy when comparing your power and endurance with that of your opponent during the test.

The lower left-hand icon enables you to start playing. When you are ready to begin, select this icon with the cursor.

The next icon provides information about your current opponent. You should ideally find out the weak spots of each champion before fighting one of them.

Finally, the furthest icon on the right allows you to abandon the game in progress.

The object of this game is simplicity itself. You have to increase your power level by moving the joystick from left to right and vice-versa, as quickly and smoothly as possible.

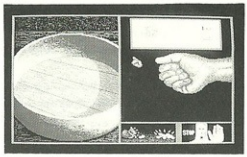
Your arm alone is the key to winning (it's a good way to build up your muscles !).

PLAYING DICE

This contest could help you to get rich quick. Played with two dice and two players, this game was very popular in the Middle Ages. In order to win, the sum of the two dice thrown must equal seven. If the combined number is lower than seven, the money wagered goes into the kitty. If the sum of the dice is higher than seven, you don't win but you get to keep the money you wagered. And if you manage to throw seven you win the money in the kitty. In the event that both players throw seven, the dice must be thrown again.

THEORY OF THE GAME

The game display comprises several different windows :



On the left-hand side of the screen, the gaming area, where the dice are thrown.

In the upper right-hand corner, your hand ready to throw the dice.

At the bottom of the screen, two icons ; the first of these shows both how much the kitty contains and the money you have left. The second icon enables you to abandon the game at any moment in time.

To start playing, move the cursor into your character's hand and press the joystick button. A window will appear in which you'll enter how much you want to bet. In order to do this, place the cursor on either end of the double arrow and hold down the joystick button until you reach the amount you want to bet. Confirm your choice by placing the cursor hand to the left of the window and press the joystick button. Your opponents will invariably make the same choice as you.

At this point your video character's hand will start to shake the dice. You throw the dice by pressing the joystick button. The dice will roll onto the gaming area and their combined score will be shown immediately. Your opponent's score appears in a window in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.

With luck, you shouldn't meet any problems, but be careful not to go bankrupt.

3) FENCING

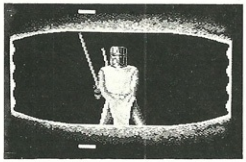
This test only takes place if an assassin attacks you while you're leaving a town. The assassins work for your uncle and will stop at nothing to kill you. The only possible outcome of this test is victory or death.

Be careful as this is one of the most difficult stages of the game. Read carefully through the following instructions before entering into combat.

The view simulates what you would see through a helmet.

Fighting is based on instinct, which a warrior of your quality is necessarily endowed with. In this game, instinct is simulated by intermittently visible icons which prompt you to react as soon as you see them.

THE GAME



You can deliver eight different types of attack, corresponding with the eight directions of the joystick. To enter the attack phase, press the joystick button otherwise you'll be in the defensive mode. This latter mode consists of three defensive measures based on the top, left and right positions of the joystick.

In order to win, surprise your opponent before he has time to react :

When an icon representing a sword appears at the top left-hand corner of the screen, it's time to attack. Quickly move the joystick in one of the eight directions, by pressing the joystick button. The faster you react when you spot an icon, the greater your chances of scoring a hit. However, if you delay action, the enemy knight will profit from your slowness by trying to attack you. Fortunately your instinct enables you to foresee the direction of the blow !

When an icon resembling an arrow appears in the right-hand corner of the screen, the arrow reveals the direction of your opponent's attack. You must quickly position your sword by using the joystick, in such a way as to parry the attack. A thrust coming from your left should be parried by moving your sword to the left ; the same goes for one coming from the right or from above (the sword moves in a similar manner to the joystick).
A quick reaction on your part will parry the thrust : failing that, you'll definitely be wounded, maybe even fatally if you've been wounded before.
Always keep an eye on both your energy level (in the lower right-hand corner) and that of your opponent (in the lower left-hand corner). This enables you to discover the enemy's stamina.

The duel finishes when one of the warriors meets his death. Try to be the survivor !

C - SAVING OR RELOADING A GAME

This operation can only be carried out from the Castle.
The Castle is your headquarters, where you'll make all your strategic decisions. To enter the castle tower, position yourself to the west of the building and press the joystick button. When you arrive at the top of the main tower, you can access a menu to save or load a game, or take the initiative to amass your army when you judge it to be powerful enough to combat your Uncle's evil forces.
Select your option by means of the cursor. Be careful !
Remember to keep a spare diskette on hand to save the game. Try to use the same one each time whether to save a game or to load a previous one.

D - THE FINAL BATTLE

This is the most important stage of your mission. You can begin it as soon as you have at least one regiment of soldiers. But don't forget ! The more troops you have, the greater your chances of winning.

To amass your army, go to the central tower of the castle.

Choose your option from the menu which is also used for saving your games. This time, select the option "RAISING AN ARMY".

If your troops are available, you'll soon see them, face to face with the enemy hordes ready to do battle...

1) HOW THE BATTLE DEVELOPS

Your army is situated in the bottom half of the screen, south of the plain. The enemy is to the north. In addition, you can recognize them by the colour they all wear : "hell fire" red.

The only possible outcome of the battle is victory or death.

The game proceeds in two stages recurring throughout the game, until one of the two armies emerges victorious. Use the cursor to select your troops.

If you place the cursor on one of your regiments' flags and then press the joystick button, a graph showing the overall physical and mental condition of your troops will appear. You can also get the same information about your enemy.

2)TROOP MANOEUVRES

Notice what happens when you hold down the joystick button during the selection of your troops: the cursor progressively changes shape. A red square means that the movement phase may be undertaken. You can therefore proceed to manoeuvre your soldiers by holding down the button and moving the joystick in one of the eight possible directions.

Every player is entitled to six manoeuvres, divided up as he so chooses. One troop movement causes one point to be deducted ; the second movement substracts another point, and so on until the six points are used up. Obviously, you can use the available points however you see fit. If you want one troop to use three manoeuvring points, another troop to use two points and another one point, that's up to you. But remember that you only have six points to achieve your initial strategy.

You make the first move. When you have used up your initial six manoeuvres the enemy follows suit with a countermove also comprising six manoeuvres. Then it will be your turn to move again, and so on...

You may eventually notice that moving your troops around tires your soldiers. Consequently, instead of pushing any one unit too hard, take your time when distributing manoeuvring points among your armies.

3) THE BATTLE PHASE

Two enemy regiments are ready to do battle when they have manoeuvred into an adjacent position. In order to initiate the confrontation, they must charge headlong into each other. If it's your turn to move and you intend to attack an enemy unit, you should make your soldiers charge into the enemy.

During the battle, a window showing the battle scene will appear in the upper right-hand section of the screen. The outcome of the battle will depend on the physical and mental condition of each troop.

Bear in mind that you can increase your chances of winning by pitting several of your regiments against a single enemy troop. In order to do so, you should bring one or your neighbouring troops into the fight, but this is only possible if it's your turn to move.
Don't allow yourself to be surrounded, and don't spread out your troops too much.

The key to overcoming these evildoers lies in careful planning and strategy.

E - THE LABYRINTH

Another challenge awaits you : to combat the evil forces of your Uncle in the heart of the labyrinth.

1) HOW THE GAME DEVELOPS :

The screen shows you an overhead view of the labyrinth. Use the joystick to move your character around.

To escape from the labyrinth you must find the exits of all six levels of the maze. These exits are represented by the following arrows :

↑ = return to the previous labyrinth ↓ = access to the next labyrinth.

A marker indicating your energy reserves is on permanent display : these reserves will decrease constantly as time passes.

2) ARCADE PHASE :

In between each level of the labyrinth, you must prove your skill in other trials.

Watch out ! You must try to avoid being touched by the acid that's thrown by flying monsters, otherwise you'll lose some of your energy reserves (the same energy indicator as the one for the labyrinth).

You must kill these monsters to get to the highest level of the labyrinth.

NOW IT'S UP TO YOU TO PROVE YOUR COURAGE AND YOUR SKILL !!!
THE FATE OF YOUR PEOPLE LIES IN YOUR HANDS.

IRON LORD